



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/602,595

06/25/2003

Keisuke Yonehama

239515US2

1422

22850

7590

09/08/2004

OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
1940 DUKE STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

OWENS, DOUGLAS W

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2811

DATE MAILED: 09/08/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/602,595

Applicant(s)

YONEHAMA ET AL.

Examiner

Douglas W Owens

Art Unit

2811

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 July 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 and 17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 16 and 18-30 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 June 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/25/03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of the invention of group I, claims 1 – 30 in the reply filed on July 2, 2004 is acknowledged.

Specification

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

in the first paragraph under the heading "2. Description of the Related Art", each reference to Fig. 6 should be changed to refer to Fig. 8;

in line 1 of page 2, "4" should be replaced with --6--, "5" should be replaced with -7--, and "6" should be replaced with --8--;

in line 2 of page 2, "5" should be replaced with --7--;

in line 6 of page 2, "4" should be replaced with --6-- and "5" should be replaced with --7--;

in line 11 of page 2, "tungsten silicon" should be replaced with --tungsten silicide--;

in line 25 of page 2, "And the," should be replaced with --subsequently-- or a similar term;

in line 34 of page 2, --a-- should be inserted between "that" and "portion";

in line 3 of page 3, each occurrence of "a" should be deleted;

in line 4 of page 3, "structure" should be replaced with --structures--;

in line 27 of page 6, "tungsten silicon" should be replaced with "tungsten silicide";

in line 10 of page 8, "gat" should be replaced with --get a--;

in line 1 of page 9, --the-- should be inserted between "is" and "same"; and

in line 2 of page 9, --the-- should be inserted between "is" and "same".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

3. Claims 1 – 30 are objected to because of the following informalities:

in line 5 of claim 1, "layer of the memory cell" should be replaced with --layers of each memory cell--;

in line 11 of claim 1, --the-- should be inserted between "being" and "same";

in line 5 of claim 16, "the" should be replaced with --each--;

in line 7 of claim 16, "the gate electrode" should be replaced with --gate electrodes-- or --adjacent gate electrodes--; and

in line 4 of claim 18, "same as that of" should be replaced with --coplanar with--.

The same position implies that the same space is occupied.

Appropriate correction is required.

4. Applicant is advised that should claim 2 be found allowable, claim 17 will be objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate thereof. When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

6. Claims 1, 2, 6 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Admitted Prior Art (Figs. 6 – 8), henceforth referred to as APA.

Regarding claim 1, APA teaches a semiconductor memory device having a gate electrode (WL1) and a diffusion layer (source/drain regions) comprising:

a plurality of memory cells, each of which including a gate electrode and the diffusion layers;

a first contact layer (116/102b) electrically connected to one of the diffusion layers of a memory cell;

a second contact layer (114b/103) connected to the first contact layer;

a bit line (115) electrically connected to the second contact layer; and

a conductive layer (114a/102a) connected to at least two of the diffusion layers (see Fig. 8) that are other than the diffusion layer connected to the first contact layer, at least two of the diffusion layer being arranged in a direction vertical to the bit line, a height of the conductive layer substantially being the same as a height of the first contact layer, where “height” is taken to refer to the highest part.

Regarding claims 2 and 17, APA teaches a semiconductor memory device, wherein the first contact layer includes a tungsten layer (Page 2, line 43 to page 3, line 2).

Regarding claim 6, APA teaches a semiconductor device, wherein the device is NOR type memory device (first sentence under the Description of the Related Art heading).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 3 – 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of US Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0008311 to Harada et al.

APA teaches a semiconductor device, wherein the first contact layer includes a tungsten film. APA does not teach a semiconductor device, wherein the first contact layer includes a first and second conductive film, the first conductive film comprising titanium and the second conductive film comprising tungsten. Harada et al. teach a semiconductor device (Fig. 2C, for example), wherein the contact layer includes a first (12a) and second (12b) conductive film, wherein the first conductive film is titanium (paragraph [0096]) and the second film is tungsten. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the

teaching of Harada et al. into that of the APA, since it is desirable to prevent unwanted diffusion of tungsten.

9. Claims 7 – 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over APA as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of US Patent No. 6,731,538 to Noda et al.

Regarding claim 7, APA does not teach a memory card including the semiconductor memory device. Noda et al. teach a memory card (Fig. 19) including a semiconductor memory device. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the teaching of APA into the memory card taught by Noda et al. since it is desirable to provide memory for memory cards.

Regarding claim 8, APA does not teach a card holder to which the memory card is inserted. Noda et al. teach a card holder (Fig. 21) to which the memory card is inserted. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate the teaching of Noda et al. into APA, since it is desirable to securely hold the device of the suggested modification suggested in the discussion of claim 7 above.

Regarding claims 9 and 10, APA does not teach a connecting device to which the memory card is inserted, wherein the connecting device is configured to be connected to a computer. Noda et al. teach a connecting device to which the memory card is inserted, wherein the connecting device is configured to be connected to a computer (Fig. 23). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate the teaching of Noda et al. into APA, since it is desirable to enable

communication between the modified device (discussed in the rejection of claim 7) and external devices.

Regarding claim 11, APA does not teach a memory card including the semiconductor memory device and a controller which controls the semiconductor memory device. Noda et al. teach a memory card including the semiconductor memory device and a controller which controls the semiconductor memory device (Fig. 20). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the teaching of APA into the memory card taught by Noda et al. since it is desirable to provide memory for memory cards, as well as controlling said memory.

Regarding claim 12, APA does not teach a card holder to which the memory card is inserted. Noda et al. teach a card holder (Fig. 21) to which the memory card is inserted. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate the teaching of Noda et al. into APA, since it is desirable to securely hold the device of the suggested modification suggested in the discussion of claim 11 above.

Regarding claims 13 and 14, APA does not teach a connecting device to which the memory card is inserted, wherein the connecting device is configured to be connected to a computer. Noda et al. teach a connecting device to which the memory card is inserted, wherein the connecting device is configured to be connected to a computer (Fig. 23). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate the teaching of Noda et al. into APA, since it is desirable to enable

communication between the modified device (discussed in the rejection of claim 11) and external devices.

Regarding claim 15, APA does not teach an IC card including the semiconductor memory device. Noda et al. teach an IC card (Fig. 20) including a semiconductor memory device. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the teaching of APA into the memory card taught by Noda et al. since it is desirable to provide memory for memory cards.

Allowable Subject Matter

10. Claims 16 and 18 – 30 contain allowable subject matter.

11. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the prior art of record does not teach, alone or in combination, a device as cited in claim 16, particularly wherein the first contact layer is formed in the first interlayer insulating layer.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Douglas W Owens whose telephone number is 571-272-1662. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eddie C Lee can be reached on 571-272-1732. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 2811

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Douglas W. Owens". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Douglas W. Owens
Patent Examiner